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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Select Committee on
Energy Independence and Global Warming
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
CHAIRMAN

June 1, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

The upcoming June 1-12 Bonn Climate Change Talks will provide the first opportunity for the United States and other Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to consider draft U.N. text¹ of a global climate change agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol.

Given the importance of these talks, I had assumed that the Administration had in place its core positions. I had also assumed that the State Department was, as you stated in your remarks of January 26, 2009, “our nation’s leader when it comes to international efforts on climate change”² and that Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern spoke for the Administration of these matters. However, events of recent days have given me pause, and I am writing to seek clarification.

In his April 22, 2009 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Stern said that it was “imperative to negotiate a strong new international agreement that will include significant commitments from all countries.”³ Furthermore, he testified that one “of the principles that guide our thinking and will inform our further refinement of policy positions” is the “need to ensure that the agreement is truly global and includes significant actions by all major economies” for “[t]he simple math of accumulating emissions shows that there is no other way to make the kinds of reductions that science indicates are necessary.”⁴

According to several news reports, however, Secretary of Energy Steven Chu disagrees with Mr. Stern’s position.

¹<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/awglca6/eng/08.pdf>.

²<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/01/115409.htm>.

³Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change, Statement to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, April 22, 2009, p. 2 (<http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/SternTestimony090422a.pdf>).

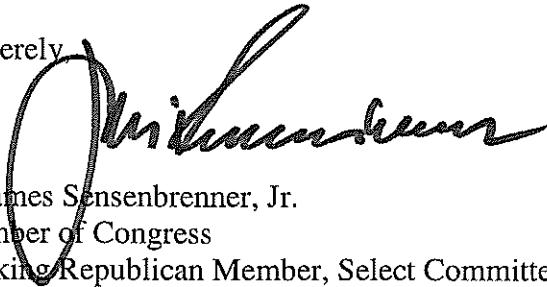
⁴*Ibid.*, p. 4.

According to Bloomberg, Secretary Chu indicated that the United States “may accept targets for reducing its greenhouse gases in an international treaty even if China doesn’t” and quotes him as saying that “one hopes that in several years China will follow.”⁵ And the May 27 *Financial Times* reports that Secretary Chu said that “[t]he US remains determined to lead the world to a new global deal on climate change” and this would be the case “[e]ven if China and other developing countries are reluctant to make commitments at December’s UN climate change conference in Copenhagen.”⁶

Please clarify for the record that the State Department still leads the Administration’s international efforts on climate change. Please also clarify the position of the United States in the U.N. climate change negotiations that are to result in an agreed outcome in Copenhagen in December. Specifically, is the United States seeking “a strong new international agreement that will include significant commitments from all countries,” as articulated by Mr. Stern, or a “new global deal on climate change” without commitments by China and other developing countries, as articulated by Secretary Chu?

Please provide clarification of the Administration’s position on these critical matters by June 15, 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.", written over a large, stylized "O" that is part of the signature itself.

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.

Member of Congress

Ranking Republican Member, Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming

cc: The Honorable Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy

The Honorable Carol Browner, Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change

⁵ Alex Morales, “Chu Says U.S. May Accept Climate Target Before China,” Bloomberg, May 26, 2009 (<http://bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601130&sid=a1Co9a.O1k8M>).

⁶ Clive Cookson and Fiona Harvey, “Chu aims to seize climate initiative,” *Financial Times*, May 27, 2009.